



Okanagan College Aboriginal Access and Services

Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 2

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New Aboriginal Recruiters

Many post-secondary institutions across the province are focusing efforts on attracting Aboriginal students into their programs. Consequently, several schools have hired full-time Aboriginal student recruiters to do just that.

Okanagan College is pleased to announce that we have hired two new Aboriginal recruiters. They will be the primary link between Aboriginal communities throughout the region and Okanagan College. Their focus is on promoting the college to local Aboriginal communities and organizations in the

hopes of attracting Aboriginal students. They will also serve to strengthen the relationship and communication between the college and the Aboriginal community.

Shelley Witzky is the Aboriginal recruiting and events coordinator for the southern half of the Okanagan College region, while Loleen MacDonald is the Aboriginal recruiting and events coordinator for the northern half of the college region.

Shelley has extensive experience working with Aboriginal clients and communities and is a member of the Shuswap Nation. Her experience and ties to the region will be a valuable asset to the college. Loleen is a recent Aboriginal graduate of the Bachelor of Business Administration degree program here at the college with a focus on marketing. Her personality and drive are sure to enhance our recruiting efforts.

I hope you will welcome Loleen and Shelley in to your communities and organizations.

Feel free to get in touch with either recruiter if you would like to meet with them to talk about the college and the services and programs that we offer.

Shelley: switzky@okanagan.bc.ca

Loleen: lmacdonald@okanagan.bc.ca

New Salmon Arm Aboriginal Student Centre - Update

The College has now awarded the contract for the construction of the new **Aboriginal Student Centre in Salmon Arm.**



As such, construction should begin in the next few weeks.

Unfortunately, because many of our community education leaders are so busy at this time of year and because the successful contractor would like to get started as soon as possible we were unable to coordinate a groundbreaking ceremony. However, it was agreed upon that the college would host a grand opening ceremony when the student centre is completed.

During construction we may host a progress meeting this spring whereby interested individuals will be invited to check on the progress of the student centre construction.

Once completed, the new Aboriginal Student Centre will be the focal point for all Aboriginal student services in Salmon Arm.

The centre will serve several purposes including but not limited to:

- Private office for Caroline Chartier, Aboriginal Mentor
- Study space
- Computer access
- Place to relax
- Gathering space
- Culturally relevant decor

If you have any questions or if you might be interested in attending a progress meeting, please feel free to get in touch with James Coble, Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator, 250.762.5445 local 4322 or at jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca

Aboriginal Studies 100

The college is pleased to announce that it is now offering Aboriginal Studies 100 as a university studies credit course.

The course is being taught by Ethan Baptiste who is Syilx (People of the Okanagan Nation), born and raised in Oliver and is now completing a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies at UBC-Okanagan.



This course, offered in Kelowna, provides students with an overview of the discipline of Aboriginal studies including the history, cultures and experiences of Aboriginals.

The college will continue to seek look at ways to offer courses and programs for Aboriginal learners.

If you have any questions about the course please contact Ethan at ebaptiste@okanagan.bc.ca.

Stick Game Event

On February 25th, 2009, Okanagan College will be hosting and presenting a stick game exhibition. It is a cultural learning opportunity provided by Aboriginal community volunteers for the whole college.

The purpose is to create a deeper understanding of our culture and where we come from. It is a part of the process of creating a culturally diverse and accepting environment.



The games will start at 10am and conclude at 2pm in the Student Services Building of the Kelowna Campus. Prizes will be available and drums will be provided.

If you are interested in learning or playing or have questions, please contact Shelley Witzky, Aboriginal Recruitment and Events Coordinator, South Region, at switzky@okanagan.bc.ca.

Important Dates For Winter 2009

January 2-16: Late Registration Period
January 5: Classes begin for Business, CIS, Commercial Aviation, Arts/Science,



Engineering Technology, and Advanced Culinary Arts Diploma

January 10: Winter convocation

January 12: Last day to submit grade appeals to Registrar's Office for Fall semester. Submission and fee must be received by the Registrar – deadline 4:00pm

January 16: Last day to register in a course for the winter semester

January 16: Last day to receive a tuition rebate for withdrawal from a winter semester course

January 16: Last day to withdraw without record of course resignation entered on the student's transcript for a winter semester course

January 16: Last day to submit a waiver or an addition to the Medical and Dental Plan. Forms to be submitted to Student Association offices by 4:00pm

February 17-20: Study break for Adult Academic and Career Preparation students in Revelstoke, Salmon Arm, Vernon, Kelowna and Penticton, and for Adult Special Education students in Kelowna, Vernon and Salmon Arm

February 16-20: Mid-semester study week for degree, diploma, and daytime ESL programs students

February 27: Last day to change from credit to audit for winter semester courses

February 27: Last day to withdraw, without penalty, from winter semester courses

March 17-20: Mid-semester study week for Adult Special Education students in Penticton

April 9: Last day of regularly scheduled classes for all degree and two-year diploma programs. Excludes Electronic Engineering Technology.

Upcoming Events

Gathering Our Voices 2009

March 17-20, 2009
Kelowna, BC
The Delta Grand Okanagan Resort

Aboriginal Youth aged 14-24 are invited to take part in a dynamic conference on Aboriginal Language, Culture and Employment. Many workshops, cultural activities, an interactive

career and education fair, evening entertainment and afternoon sport and recreation activities will be offered.

The 2009 Provincial Aboriginal Youth Conference will serve as a catalyst for change by providing youth with skills, knowledge, cultural pride, and inspiration that they can bring back to their communities. The conference will strengthen youth leadership, build self-esteem, create relationships, and generate opportunities. Through connections made and experiences shared at the conference, youth will be better equipped to join in collective work towards a more positive economic and social future.

For more information please visit their website: www.bcaafc.com

Or Contact Rosy Steinhauer, Team Support Assistant, BCAAFC

E-mail: rsteinhauer@bcaafc.com

Phone: 1-800-990-2432 / (250) 388-5522

8th Annual Talking Stick Conference

February 9-15, 2009
Vancouver, BC

A Celebration of Aboriginal Performance and Art!

First Nations Performance presents the 8th Annual Talking Stick Festival, February 9 - 15, 2009, A celebration of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal performance and art. This year's Talking Stick Festival will unite a diverse and talented community of local, national and international Aboriginal artists and feature a fusion of music, dance, theatre, multimedia, performance art, visual art and storytelling. The vibrant city-wide event takes place at a range of venues, including the Kay Meek Centre, the Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, the Ironworks Studio, the Aboriginal Friendship Centre, the First Nations House of Learning and the Wise Hall.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.ticketstonight.ca.



5th Cowichan International Aboriginal Film & Art Festival

**April 16-19, 2009
Cowichan, B.C
Cowichan Theatre**

Annual event celebration of indigenous film and art, featuring award winning films from leading international Indigenous and Métis filmmakers. This event is presented by the Cowichan Intercultural Festival of Film & Arts Society with the generous support of Cowichan Tribes.

For more information go to:
www.aff.cowichan.net.

Websites of Interest

Okanagan College Aboriginal Programs and Services Webpage:
<http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/aboriginal>

Aboriginal Funding Tool:
<http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/apps/fundingtool.nsf/>

Aboriginal Canada Portal:
<http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/en/index.html>

Aboriginal Services Contact Information

James Coble
Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator
Okanagan College, Kelowna
Office: S124A
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 – 4:00
Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4322
Fax: 250.862.5496
Email: jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca

Ethan Baptiste
Aboriginal Mentor
Okanagan College, Kelowna
Office: S124A
Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 8:30-4:30
Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4682
Email: ebaptiste@okanagan.bc.ca

Robert Searle
Aboriginal Mentor
Okanagan College, Penticton
Office: A1E Sunoka Building
Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 8:30-4:30
Tel: 250.492.4305 ext. 3261
Email: rsearle@okanagan.bc.ca

Marilyn Alexis
Educational Advisor, Aboriginal Mentor
Okanagan College, Vernon
Office: A306 (Wed.), D220 (Tues. & Thurs.)
Hours: Tuesday to Thursday, 8:30 – 4:30
Tel: 250.545.7291 ext. 2209 (Wed.) ext. 2284 (Tues. & Thurs.)
Email: malexis@okanagan.bc.ca

Caroline Chartier
Aboriginal Mentor
Okanagan College, Salmon Arm
Office: 121
Hours: Thursday 8:30am – 4:00pm
Tel: 250.832.2126 ext. 8237
Email: cchartier@okanagan.bc.ca

Shelley Witzky
Aboriginal Recruitment and Events Coordinator, Southern Region
Okanagan College, Penticton
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 – 4:00
Tel: 250.492.4305 ext. 3229
Email: switzky@okanagan.bc.ca

Loleen MacDonald
Aboriginal Recruitment and Events Coordinator, Northern Region
Okanagan College, Salmon Arm/Vernon
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 – 4:00
Tel: 250.545.7291 ext. 2269 or 250.832.2126 ext 8237
Email: lmacdonald@okanagan.bc.ca